

WORLD WAR I

WORLD WAR I ranks second only to World War II as the most bloody and most costly war in modern history. Two pistol shots signaled the start of war. An armistice ended the fighting four years later.

Shortly before noon on Sunday, June 28, 1914, crowds gathered in Sarajevo, the capital of the Austrian province of Bosnia. They came to see Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife Sophie. Suddenly a man jumped on the running board of the royal touring car and fired a pistol. Two shots struck Ferdinand and one hit Sophie, who was trying to shield him. They both died almost immediately. The assassin was Gavrilo Princip, a young Bosnian student who had lived in Serbia.

Austria-Hungary suspected that its small neighbor, Serbia, had approved the plot to kill Ferdinand. As a result, it declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. By October 30, the Central Powers—Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire—were at war with the Allies—Belgium, France, Great Britain, Russia, and



In World War I, Germany and the other Central Powers fought more than 20 Allied nations. The map shows a colony or dependency in the same color as the country governing it.

Allies

Belgium (Aug. 4, 1914)
 Brazil (Oct. 26, 1917)
 British Empire (Aug. 4, 1914)
 China (Aug. 14, 1917)
 Costa Rica (May 23, 1918)
 Cuba (Apr. 7, 1917)
 France (Aug. 3, 1914)
 Greece (June 27, 1917)
 Guatemala (Apr. 23, 1918)
 Haiti (July 12, 1918)
 Honduras (July 19, 1918)
 Italy (May 23, 1915)

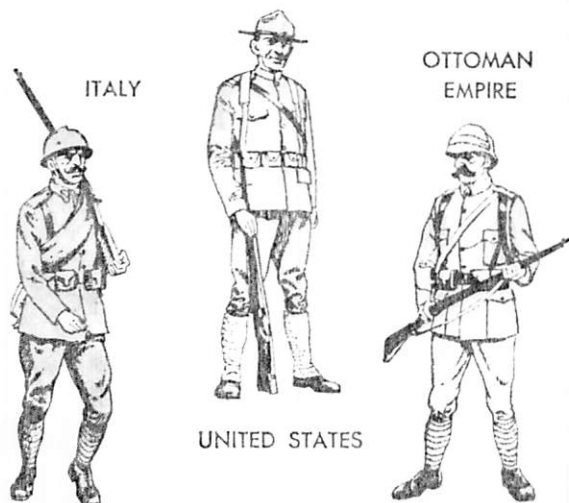
Japan (Aug. 23, 1914)
 Liberia (Aug. 4, 1917)
 Montenegro (Aug. 5, 1914)
 Nicaragua (May 8, 1918)
 Panama (Apr. 7, 1917)
 Portugal (Mar. 9, 1916)
 Romania (Aug. 27, 1916)
 Russia (Aug. 1, 1914)
 San Marino (June 3, 1915)
 Serbia (July 28, 1914)
 Siam (July 22, 1917)
 United States (Apr. 6, 1917)

Central Powers

Austria-Hungary
 (July 28, 1914)
 Bulgaria (Oct. 14, 1915)

Germany (Aug. 1, 1914)
 Ottoman Empire
 (Oct. 29, 1914)

The date given after each country's name is the date on which it entered World War I.



HIGHLIGHTS OF WORLD WAR I

1914

- June 28 Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated.
- July 28 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
- July 30 Russia ordered general mobilization.
- Aug. 1 Germany declared war on Russia.
- Aug. 3 Germany declared war on France.
- Aug. 4 Germany invaded Belgium. Great Britain declared war on Germany.
- Aug. 26-31 The Germans crushed the Russian Second Army at Tannenberg.
- Sept. 1-Oct. 3 The Russians defeated the Austrians in the Battles of Lemberg.
- Sept. 6-9 The Allies stopped the Germans in the First Battle of the Marne.
- Oct. 21-Nov. 17 Germany failed to reach the English Channel in the First Battle of Ypres.
- Oct. 29 The Turks joined the Central Powers.

1915

- Feb. 18 Germany started to blockade Great Britain.
- Apr. 22 The Germans first used poison gas, in the Second Battle of Ypres.
- Apr. 25 Allied troops landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula.
- May 2 The Austrians began an offensive in Galicia.
- May 7 A German submarine sank the liner *Lusitania*.
- May 23 Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary.

1916

- Feb. 21 The Germans opened the Battle of Verdun.
- Apr. 29 Kut-al-Amara (Al Kūt), with 10,000 British troops, surrendered to the Turks.
- May 31-June 1 The British fleet fought the German fleet in the Battle of Jutland.
- June 4 Russia began an offensive in eastern Galicia.
- July 1-Nov. 18 The Allies advanced in the Battles of the Somme.
- Aug. 27 Italy declared war on Germany.
- Sept. 15 The British army first used tanks.

1917

- Feb. 1 Germany began unrestricted submarine warfare.
- Apr. 6 The United States declared war on Germany.
- June 26 American troops began landing in France.
- July 31-Aug. 9 Germany ended Russia's last offensive.
- July 31-Nov. 10 Germany stopped the Allies in the Third Battle of Ypres.
- Nov. 7 (Oct. 25 in the old Russian calendar) The Bolsheviks seized power in Russia.
- Dec. 9 Jerusalem fell to the Allies.
- Dec. 15 Russia signed an armistice with Germany.

1918

- Jan. 8 President Woodrow Wilson announced his Fourteen Points as the basis for peace.
- Mar. 3 Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
- Mar. 21 Germany launched the first of its final offensives along the Somme.
- Apr. 9 Germany launched an offensive at Ypres.
- May 27 Germany launched an offensive on the Aisne.
- June 15 Austria-Hungary fought its last offensive.
- June 23 The Allies occupied Murmansk, Russia.
- June 25 American marines captured Belleau Wood.
- July 15 Germany launched its last offensive on the Marne.
- July 18 France began the Second Battle of the Marne.
- July 21 Allied troops recaptured Château-Thierry.
- Aug. 8 The British broke the German line at Amiens.
- Sept. 26 The Allies began their final offensive on the western front.
- Sept. 29 Bulgaria signed an armistice.
- Oct. 30 The Ottoman Empire signed an armistice.
- Nov. 3 Austria signed an armistice.
- Nov. 9 Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany abdicated.
- Nov. 11 Germany signed the armistice.



Sinking of Neutral Ships by German submarines caused the United States to go to war.



Submarines menaced Allied ships and by themselves nearly won the war for Germany.

Austria-Hungary controlled lands that several of its neighbors thought should belong to them. Serbia, a Slavic nation, wanted the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because it wanted an outlet to the sea and because so many Slavs lived there. Italy wanted to take the Trentino region and Trieste away from Austria-Hungary, because many Italians lived in these places. The Czechs and the Slovaks also sought to free themselves from Austrian and Hungarian control.

People of many different nationalities lived in Russia, including Estonians, Finns, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Poles. They, too, wanted freedom. In the Balkan Peninsula—often called the *powder keg of Europe* because of many small wars—Bulgarians, Greeks, Romanians, Serbs, and other peoples resented long years of Turkish misrule, and interference by other countries.

The leaders of the Congress of Vienna might have taken care of the national desires of many people in central and eastern Europe if they had wanted to do so. But they decided otherwise.

Some countries had *war cults* (organizations that glorified war). Members of these groups sometimes insulted neighboring peoples, who were quick to take offense. Warmongers sneered at foreign ways of doing things. Often, sensational newspaper stories helped spread their propaganda. Some German leaders vigorously urged commercial and political expansion to the east, especially in Asia. They called this policy of

November 3, representatives of Emperor Charles I agreed to an armistice. Germany stood alone.

The Armistice. Sailors in the German High Sea Fleet at Kiel mutinied in late October. As the news spread, revolts broke out in other parts of Germany. Small mutinies flared among German troops as food and munitions supplies dwindled. Hindenburg told Kaiser Wilhelm II that, to avoid a catastrophe, Germany must seek an immediate armistice with the Allies. The Kaiser appointed Prince Max of Baden as Chancellor with the task of seeking an armistice. Prince Max appealed to President Wilson for armistice terms. On November 7, the world received a premature news story that the Germans had signed an armistice. This has been called "the false armistice."

A German armistice delegation went to Foch's headquarters near Rethondes in the Forest of Compiègne on November 7. Foch outlined the armistice terms: the Germans were to (1) evacuate all occupied territory, (2) surrender their arms and warships, (3) withdraw all forces from west of the Rhine, (4) return Allied prisoners, and (5) permit Allied troops to occupy German territory. Foch gave the Germans 72 hours to accept the terms. In Berlin, German socialists under Friedrich Ebert proclaimed a German Republic on November 9. Kaiser Wilhelm abdicated and fled to neutral Netherlands.

In a drizzling rain, the German delegates entered a railway car in the Compiègne Forest, and at 5 A.M. November 11, signed the armistice. Foch signed for the Allies and Secretary of State Matthias Erzberger signed for Germany. Foch ordered fighting to stop on all battlefronts at 11 A.M. World War I had ended.

At the time of the armistice, Allied troops stood about 120 miles (193 kilometers) from the Rhine River in northern Germany. The Allies established a neutral zone 6 miles (10 kilometers) wide along the river's east bank. British and Belgian troops occupied a bridgehead at Cologne. American forces had headquarters at the Koblenz bridgehead. French occupation forces held the bridgehead in the Mainz area. From these three points, the Allies commanded the Rhine valley. In 1923, the last American troops in Germany withdrew. The last Allied soldiers, French and Belgian, left in 1930.

Results of the War

The peace settlements after World War I healed many old wounds. But they inflicted new ones. The Allies had emphasized the principle of *self-determination* (the right of each nation to choose its own form of government). This caused the flame of nationalism to burn even more brightly than it had before 1914. The Allies formed the League of Nations and a World Court as agencies to settle disputes peacefully. But member nations did not always support these agencies in international disputes. The United States did not join the League of Nations (see LEAGUE OF NATIONS).

War Losses. World War I took the lives of twice as many men as all major wars from 1790 to 1913 put together. About 63 of every 100 servicemen who died came from the Allied armed forces. The number of civilian deaths in areas of actual war totaled about 5,000,000. Starvation, disease, and exposure accounted for about 80 of every 100 of these civilian deaths. Spanish influenza, which some persons blamed on the war, caused tens of millions of other deaths.

World War I cost more than \$337 billion. Of this amount, about \$186 billion paid the direct cost of carrying on the war. The Allies spent about two-thirds of the money used to buy guns, food, ammunitions, and other war materials. During the first three years of war, the fighting nations spent more than \$85,000 every minute, and twice that amount in 1918. None of these figures includes the additional economic loss involved in servicemen crippled, the billions of dollars needed to pay interest on war debts, or the pensions paid to veterans and their families.

About \$8 of every \$10 spent for the war came from borrowed funds. The warring countries sold bonds to individuals and firms. For example, the United States borrowed money from its citizens through Liberty Loans. It also raised money by new taxes such as the excess-profits tax and the luxury tax. Tax receipts totaled about \$11,280,000,000 in 1917 and 1918. The United States loaned more than \$10 billion to the Allies (see WAR DEBT).

The Home Front in Europe came under intense bombing and shelling in areas of military operations. The war destroyed the industrial and community lives of many cities, towns, and villages in these areas. It closed or destroyed schools, factories, roads, and railroads. In many countries, people had to depend on food supplied by their governments.

In eastern Europe and the Balkans, millions of persons fled their homes in terror of invasion. Refugees moved helplessly from place to place in search of food, shelter, and clothing. They sought shelter in the ruins of blasted buildings and houses. After the war, those who tried to return to their homes often found that their towns or villages no longer existed.

During and immediately after the war, the Allies sent food and supplies to war-shattered countries. The United

— MILITARY CASUALTIES IN WORLD WAR I (1914-1918) —

	Total Casualties	Dood	Wounded	Prisoners or Missing
THE ALLIES				
Belgium (including colonials)	126,154	45,550	78,624	73,976
British Empire (including Canada, Ireland, and colonials)	2,384,860	942,135	2,110,933	197,874
France (including colonials)	4,968,000	1,368,000	3,600,000	557,000
Greece	38,310	23,098	14,145	1,067
Italy	2,197,000	680,000	947,000	600,000
Japan	13,245	1,344	11,901	(X)
Montenegro	*50,000	*3,000	*10,000	*7,000
Portugal	22,929	8,145	14,784	(X)
Romania	*405,545	*300,000	*105,000	*80,000
Russia	*9,150,000	*1,700,000	*4,950,000	*2,500,000
Serbia	*331,106	*45,000	*133,148	*152,958
United States	320,518	116,516	204,002	4,500
THE CENTRAL POWERS				
Austria-Hungary	4,820,000	1,200,000	3,620,000	2,200,000
Bulgaria	256,250	87,495	155,026	13,729
Germany	6,251,000	1,935,000	4,216,058	990,000
Ottoman Empire	2,290,000	725,000	1,565,000	(X)

From official estimates provided by respective embassies or military attachés.
 * Unofficial. (X) Unavailable.